175 Sanusi against the Italians in Cyrenaica. "When the British
648 reached Matruh, they jailed all of the 'umdas and shaikhs
554 (two 'umdas and five shaikhs, at that time). Then they chose
631 new leaders, from the families of the old leaders, to work with them." But, "these men did not fight with the British, they only acted as their guides in dealing with the Bedouins of the desert. When the old leaders were released from jail, they returned to their positions of political office. While they were in jail, their replacements had only helped the [178] British with supplies." Apparently, the British saw the need of maintaining the continuity of the Bedouin authority structure.

175 Data on the condition of the Bedouins of the Western
648 Desert between the two world wars are absent. The Bedouins say that they lived with no trouble, or any help, from the Egyptians. The Bedouins have no fond memories of their experiences during World War II. They first heard of the war in 1940 when the Italians marched into Western Desert from Libya. The Germans occupied al-Qasr from May to October of 1942, when the famous General Rommel had his headquarters at Marsa Matruh. The British had told the Bedouins, in 1940, that they should flee the Italians, and that unless they did they would be held responsible for their actions. Most of the
175 people of al-Qasr agreed to go to refugee camps at Amriyya
648 near Alexandria for the duration of the war.
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[556] Some of the Bedouins refused to leave for Amriyya.

175 These were the wealthy group who had large numbers of sheep
648 and camels. In fact, most of the animals taken east to
•722 Amriyya died on the way or were expropriated by the British.
556 'Umran Kailani, "who owned one thousand camels" and was the
166 shaikh of the 'Ali Ahmar section of the Awlad 'Ali at the time, refused to go to Amriyya. The Bedouins say that he was treated very well by the Germans who asked him to form a local government and promised him all the help and supplies that he needed. It is difficult to obtain figures on how many Bedouins made the migration to the Nile Valley and how many remained
[162] behind in the Al-Qasr area. One informant told me that before the war there were about 80,000 members of the Awlad 'Ali in the Western Desert and that out of this number, about 30,000 remained behind.

175 Those who sought refuge at Amriyya returned to the
648 al-Qasr area at the end of 1942 after the defeat of the Germans
727 at al-Alamain. They found things greatly changed. Before the war, there had been about twenty buildings in the al-Qasr area and most of these were bombed out by the air war. The loss of animals and the damage to the land made the resumption of normal life quite difficult for the Bedouins. Underneath, the land was literally a bed of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines left by the advance and retreat of three different armies. This restricted Bedouin travel and everyday food-
648 getting activities. This condition, which still exists, has
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3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

When things were quiet members of a band would have their families and herds with them and live in their own tents, but when pressed they left their women and children and beasts in the tents of the submitted population and the only non-combatants in their camps would then be a few female cooks. Before the end of the war many of the Patriots, including Sidi 'Umar, had sent their families to Egypt so that they could act more freely.

There was also a general administration for all the bands and this came directly under Sidi 'Umar. They maintained intercommunication and worked to a common strategy. Guerrilla headquarters had also to arrange for the collection of a tithe from the entire population to help pay for the expenses of the campaign. Throughout the war Sidi 'Umar's tax-collectors were taking tithes from the submitted population, not always without trouble, and were giving written receipts for the payments. The tithe paid by each tribe went to support its own band. Sidi 'Umar had also to arrange for caravans to bring supplies from Egypt, and to supervise their distribution to the armed forces and the payment of customs dues on what went to the civilian population. Sidi 'Umar also kept up correspondence with Sayyid Idris and Sanusi elements and sympathizers in Egypt.

The guerrilla bands were in constant contact with the enemy. One of the most striking features of the campaign was the frequency of the fighting. At some point or other on the plateau a skirmish or larger engagement took place every few days for nearly nine years during the spring and summer months. In the account of the campaign which follows I mention but few of these fights, those which had exceptional importance for the campaign as a whole or as examples of the scale of the fighting. The few mentioned are therefore no indication of the amount of fighting. Its frequency may be judged by Gen. Graziani's statement that in the final year of the war, when resistance, compared with earlier years, was feeble and sporadic, there took place 53 engagements (*combattimenti*) and 210 skirmishes (*conflitti*).[1]

This incessant fighting cannot, as I have already said, be described in the language of text-book logistics in terms of manœuvring, objectives, and battles. Indeed, the Italians had

[1] *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, vol. vi (I), 1932, pp. 52–3.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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common effort to reconstruct the life of the country. The first object of the Government was now to increase the Bedouin population, not to destroy it, for the country could never be prosperous in its present depopulated state. At least 20,000 refugees had taken refuge during the war in Egypt and elsewhere and they could not be expected to return unless a more conciliatory policy were pursued.

Selected Arab officials were attached to the Italian Consulates in Egypt to do propaganda among the refugees, and those who returned were given food, clothing, and beasts. This policy met with some success. In Egypt, where most of the refugees lived, the Bedouin were faced with the choice between becoming wage-earners or leading a gipsy life on the edge of the cultivations. The temptation to return to their country, where they were used to a life of freedom and plenty, was too great for many of them, in spite of Italian occupation. It was, as they say, *yakhtar akhaf al-dararain*, the choice of the lighter of two evils. Between 5,000 and 10,000 must have returned by the middle of 1940. Besides a general amnesty to induce the refugees to return, pardon was granted to almost all political prisoners, and by 1939 only a very few remained in jail or enforced exile. Instructions were given for this fact to be made widely known to neutralize anti-Italian propaganda in Arab countries.

It was possible to adopt a milder policy because the Bedouin had been disarmed and were unable to cause further trouble. It had long been recognized that while they possessed arms they would use them against the Italians if given an opportunity. As early as August 1912, in the very premature *Norme Sommarie* for Political Officers, it was stressed that the Bedouin regard rifles as essential as horses and that no amount of persuasion would make them part with either, especially as 'there is not an Arab in the country who, in asking himself why we have come, does not reply to himself and to others, "To take our lands, our beasts, our women" '. Because of the strong feelings of the Bedouin on an issue which touched their manhood no very determined attempt was made to disarm those tribal sections which submitted to the Italians till the second Italo-Sanusi war was well advanced, and it was not till Graziani was made Vice-Governor in March 1930 that total disarmament of the civilian population was aimed at.